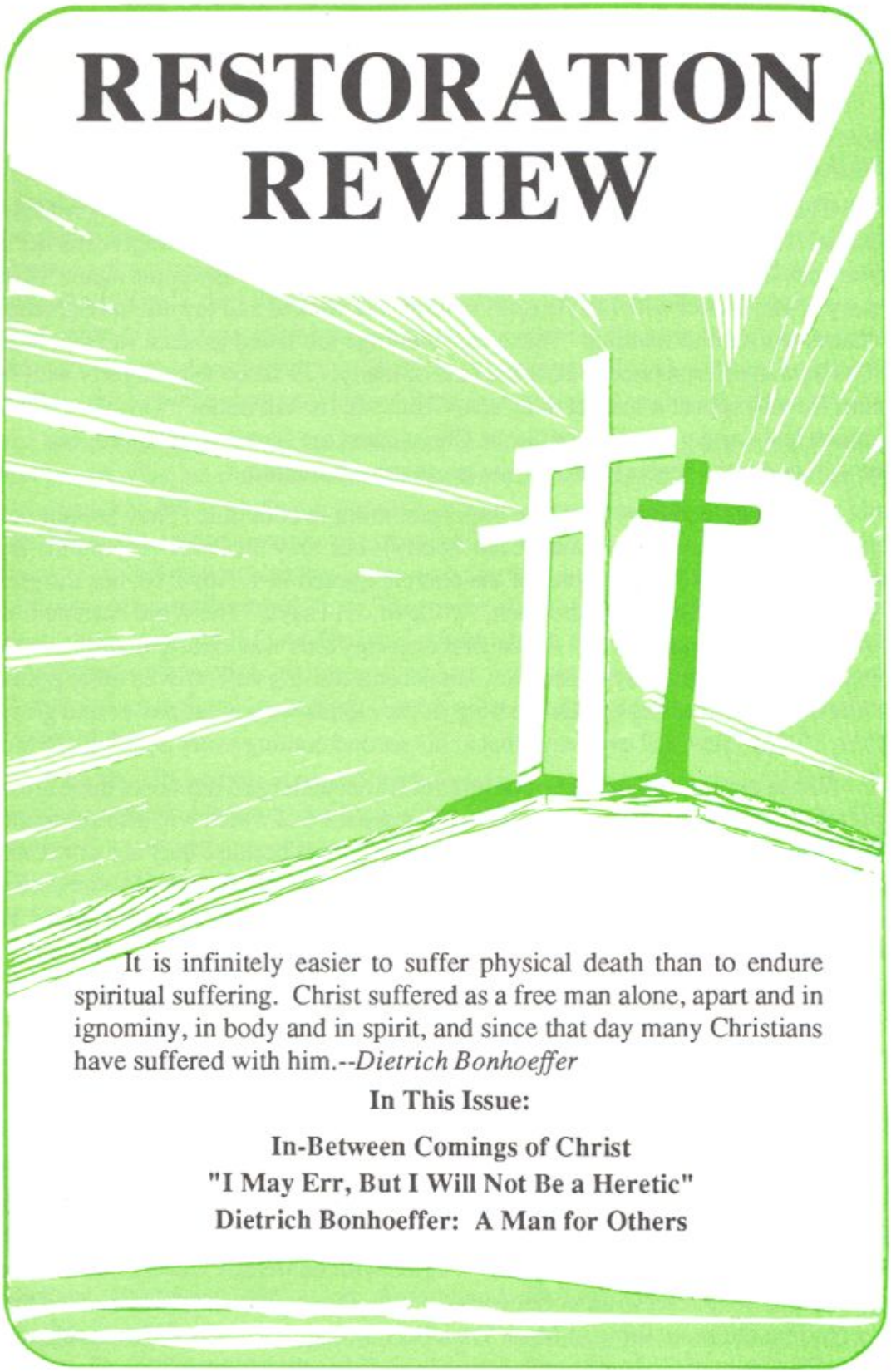
RESTORATION REVIEW



It is infinitely easier to suffer physical death than to endure spiritual suffering. Christ suffered as a free man alone, apart and in ignominy, in body and in spirit, and since that day many Christians have suffered with him.--*Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

In This Issue:

In-Between Comings of Christ
"I May Err, But I Will Not Be a Heretic"
Dietrich Bonhoeffer: A Man for Others

Volume 32, No. 5 **Leroy Garrett, Editor** **May, 1990**

Volume 32, No. 5 **Leroy Garrett, Editor** **May 1990**

The Hope of the Believer … No. 15

IN-BETWEEN COMINGS OF CHRIST

Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom. - Mt. 16:28

The church through the ages has always professed faith in two comings of Jesus Christ. He left heaven and came to this world of sin and sorrow to give his life as a ransom for many. That was his first coming. He will one day come again "in the glory of His Father with His Angels" to judge the wicked and reward the righteous. That is his second coming. These two comings are listed as such in Heb. 9:28: "Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation." This the catholic church has always proclaimed: Jesus Christ came the first time to die for our sins; he will come the second time for the great consummation.

These two comings have one important thing in common. They are not only both real, actual, and personal (even bodily), but they are both very public and openly manifest. An old hymn of the church, quoted in 1 Tim 3:16, has the great line, "He was manifested in the flesh," while Jn. 1:14 says, "The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us." At his first coming Jesus was clearly manifest in the world, seen and heard by multitudes. His second coming will be even more public: "They will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory" (Mk. 13:26). Rev. 1:7 even says that at his second coming every eye will see him.

While our faith in these two comings of Christ undergird our hope, there are in-between comings of our Lord that we seem less aware of which will also strengthen our hope. We may be less conscious of these comings because they are sometimes confused with his second coming. I mean by this that we understand some texts to refer to the second coming which really refer to an in-between coming. Notice, for instance, Mt. 16:27-28:

> The Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. (Verse 27)
>
> Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom. (Verse 28)

While Matthew in arranging the sayings of Jesus grouped these statements together, it is highly probable that they refer to two different events. Verse 27 clearly refers to the second coming, but if verse 28 refers to the same event we have an insurmountable problem in that some of those who heard Jesus make that statement were not to die until it came to pass. I agree with numerous scholars who understand verse 28 to refer to an in-between coming, though it is not always called that. By reading the same thing in Mark 9:1 it becomes apparent that Jesus is referring to the "kingdom of God come with power" as it did on the Mount of Transfiguration. Jesus selected three of those who were standing by when he made that promise, Peter, James, and John, to be present when he was transfigured in glory, thus fulfilling the prediction that some of them would live to see it.

Some interpreters apply this in-between coming to the descent of the Holy Spirit at the next Pentecost and some even to the destruction of Jerusalem, but it more likely refers to that event that Matthew, Mark, and Luke all go on to relate after recording Jesus' marvelous prediction. In Lk. 9:27, for example, Jesus says, "I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God," and then the record goes on to tell about the transfiguration. It is the same in Matthew and Mark with minor variations. I take it, therefore, that the evangelists intend to convey to us that three of the apostles saw Jesus "coming in His kingdom" when they saw him gloriously manifested in the transfiguration.

The transfiguration was therefore an in-between coming of Christ, a glorious preview of what we shall all see at the final manifestation of our Lord from heaven in the last day. What a buoyant hope it is to believe we will one day experience what those three disciples experienced in that mountain! The truths of the transfiguration make it less difficult to bear hardships, and that may be why those weak, vulnerable men were given such a revelation. They were allowed to see, *in advance* as it were, the glorious coming of Jesus Christ. On that mount they were with Jesus the man, but they were allowed to see him as they had never seen him before, as the heavenly Christ clothed in the glory of God. That is what we shall one day see. How glorious to contemplate!

The transfiguration was also the meeting of two worlds, this world and the world to come. Moses and Elijah, citizens of heaven, were also present. The disciples, awed and speechless, could hear these heroes of a bygone age talk with Jesus about what he was to suffer in Jerusalem. Peter, James, and John were on earth and in heaven at the same time. This is how it will be when the Lord at last comes in his glory. In that moment we will be part of two worlds.

This story shows how the in-between comings, unlike the two comings, are private and restricted, involving only a few people, sometimes only one person. But since they are revealed to us in the holy Scriptures we get in on them, and they are there to increase our faith and buttress our hope.

Another exciting in-between coming involves but one person, the apostle John, to whom Jesus said toward the end of his earthly sojourn, “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you. You follow Me” (Jn. 21:22). Jesus said this to Peter, who seemed unduly solicitous about what would happen to John. That is a lesson within itself, for Jesus tells Peter that he doesn’t have to keep tabs on the other fellow but to be responsible for himself. *Follow me! That will keep you busy enough!*

While this text is a bit obscure and we can’t be sure, it looks as if Jesus *is* saying that it is his will that John live until he comes. John himself, who pens the account, apparently had some problem with this, for he goes on to tell how it was rumored that he would not die. So he hastens to explain that Jesus didn’t actually say that he would not die, but “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you.”

I venture that Jesus did indeed will that John live till he came again, but it is an in-between coming and not the second coming. The Mormons do not have to conclude from this incident that the apostle John is still alive somewhere in the world today awaiting the second coming, almost 2000 years old! There is a better answer, a biblical one. The Lord did come again, over a half century later, to the isle of Patmos and appeared to the aged apostle. It was a kind of replay of what John had seen in the transfiguration when he was a young man. On the Mount of Transfiguration the youthful John was speechless with fear; on the isle of Patmos the aged apostle fell at Jesus’ feet as a dead man. What a revelation it must have been, what an in-between coming!

John himself tells the story in Rev. 1. Jesus’ voice was like the sound of a trumpet, and he says to the apostle, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last. What you see write in a book and send it to the seven churches of Asia.” What comforting words Jesus went on to speak to his aged disciple, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. I have the keys of Hades and death.”

John tells us what Jesus looked like on this occasion. He was like the Son of Man but clothed like a priest with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His hair was white like wool, his eyes like a flame of fire. There was the

glory of the transfiguration, for Jesus' countenance was like the sun shining in its strength, and his voice was as the sound of many waters. It was one more instance of heaven coming down to earth.

Then there is that great line in verse 17: "He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, 'Do not be afraid.", Jesus comes down from heaven to a barren island to visit an exiled old soldier of the Cross and lays his hand on him and tells him everything is going to be all right. It had been some sixty years since Jesus had intimated that John would indeed live till he came again. What a coming that was!

Another in-between coming was when Jesus came to his disciples in the form of the Holy Spirit. It is significant that our Lord now and again refers to the descent of the Spirit as his coming back to his disciples. It is clearly stated in Jn. 14:18 where Jesus is discussing the mission of the Holy Spirit: "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you." Back in verse 3 Jesus tells the disciples that "I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also," which refers to the second coming. But in verse 16 he starts talking about the Holy Spirit, whom he identifies as "another Helper" or Comforter. The word "another" indicates another of the same likeness; that is, the Holy Spirit will be "just like" Jesus in serving as a helper or comforter.

So our Lord refers to the tender loving care of the Spirit, whom he sends "that He may abide with you forever," and then says in verse 18, "I will not leave you orphans," which means he will not leave them destitute or without help. Then he adds "I will come to you." This does not refer to the second coming, but to an in-between coming. Jesus came in the presence of the Holy Spirit, beginning on the day of Pentecost and continuing in his church from then on: "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Mt. 28:20).

It is one of the great comforting truths of holy Scripture that Jesus Christ is forever present in his church and in the lives of all who believe in him. He is our absent friend only in the sense that he is bodily present in heaven with the heavenly Father. He is our ever-present friend in that the Holy Spirit, whom he sent in his name, is his Spirit. Yes, he did indeed leave us and went to heaven, but he soon came again in the presence of the Holy Spirit and is forever present with us. We are never alone. We have a Comforter or Helper just like him. It seems almost too good to be true!

This particular in-between coming has an especially glorious touch, for Jesus says in Jn. 14:23 that he is not only coming to be with us but God as well. It is a promise that should awe us in its magnanimity: "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My

Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." *We will come and make our home with you.* When is this, when will God and Jesus come in this manner? Whenever we open our hearts and invite them in! When the Holy Guest of heaven comes to live with us because of our faith and obedience to Jesus Christ, the Father and the Son are at home with us. We can see that we have every reason to practice the presence of God.

The in-between comings are frequent enough in Scripture that sometimes we can't be sure whether our Lord is referring to a very soon coming or his second coming, which may be long delayed -long to us that is! For instance, when Jesus speaks to the church at Philadelphia and says "Behold, I come quickly!" (Rev. 3:11) is he saying he is coming to that church imminently or is he referring to his second coming? Judging by what he said to other of the seven churches we might conclude that Jesus refers to an in-between coming. It is clear that he was referring to an imminent, in-between coming when he said to the church at Ephesus, "Repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place —unless you repent" (Rev. 2:5). It is the same with the church at Pergamos: "Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth" (Rev. 2:16). These are threats of an imminent coming, and they have a ring of judgment. But still they are referred to as comings of Christ.

The comings of our Lord, whether in-between or final, should be a precious reality to us. In Rev. 3:20 we have this glorious promise: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come and dine with him, and he with Me." Here is an immediate coming of our Lord that is for us all for the asking and the commitment. It is a private, personal coming of Jesus into our lives. When we have this coming of Christ into our hearts it may not matter all that much when he will come in endtime. He is already with us; he has already come, and he keeps on coming to us. So when he comes finally in clouds of glory, when all the world will see him, we will not be greeting a stranger. We will meet a Friend who has been with us all along. So, the in-between comings prepare us for his second coming. —*the Editor*

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

"I MAY ERR, BUT I WILL NOT BE A HERETIC"

This quotation is from the pen of Augustine of Hippo, a fourth century church father who had considerable influence upon the theology of the church. He had a way with words, sometimes startling in their import, such as, “Love God and do what you please.” But he had his bases covered on that one, for if you love God as Augustine would have you love God, then you would be pleased to do what pleases God!

This cryptic statement of his, “I may err, but I will not be a heretic,” has special interest to me because it had some influence on the thinking of early leaders of the Stone-Campbell Movement. W. K. Pendleton, who succeeded Alexander Campbell both as president of Bethany College and as editor of the journal Campbell founded, *The Millennial Harbinger.* quoted this line from Augustine as he wrote about the nature of heresy.

It was Pendleton’s understanding that heresy is not simply an erroneous viewpoint and may not be error at all. Heresy is rather “the tyranny of opinionism,” Pendleton noted, and is therefore more of a behavioral problem than a doctrinal one.

Our pioneers had their problems with heretics and defectors. There was Sidney Rigdon whom Campbell called a “Mormonite” because he joined league with Joseph Smith in founding the Mormon church. There was Jesse Ferguson, at one time the most popular preacher in the Movement, who became a spiritualist and conducted seances with the dead while still minister of the Church of Christ in Nashville. There was Dr. John Thomas who lead a “rebaptism” movement (baptism is not valid unless one understands it is for the remission of sins) and finally left and started the Christadelphian sect.

There were other preachers whom we would today call “Charismatic” whose views on the ministry of the Holy Spirit caused problems. One of them was a graduate of Bethany College who became a college president in Jacksonville, Illinois while yet in his 20’s. His unorthodox views on the work of the Spirit divided both the college and the church. Campbell, who once highly esteemed him, named him a “schismatic.” He was forced from the fellowship of the Movement only to die in the Civil War a few years later.

But Pendleton, along with Campbell and other leaders, did not name these men heretics and schismatics because of their doctrines, however erroneous these may have been, but because they tyrannized with their opinions. If they had held their views as private property and not been pushy they would not have been heretics. They were schismatic because they created dissensions, factions, and sects. Sidney Rigdon started a

sect. One of the "Spirit" preachers conducted a separate service at the court house, apart from the church that had hired him and without its consent, so as to promote his unique views.

It is this kind of behavior that is the heresy, Pendleton argued, and not doctrine *per se.* These men could have been correct in their views but they were still heretics because of their conduct. He claimed New Testament support for this distinction. Opinions, right or wrong, are not themselves condemned in Scripture, but rather it is "Let each be fully persuaded in his own mind" (Rom. 14:5). It is those who "cause divisions and offences" (Rom. 16:17) that are the heretics, not those who innocently and mistakenly hold a wrong position. Error sincerely and peacefully held is never heresy in the Bible.

To buttress his position Pendleton quoted the renowned Scottish divine, George Campbell, who said that error alone, however gross, is not heresy. Heresy is rather "malignity or perverseness of disposition," Campbell noted. One may be as right doctrinally but wrong in spirit. Heresy is when one is so perverse and meanspirited as to try to separate brethren, divide the Body of Christ, and build a party around himself.

And Pendleton quoted the great Augustine whose quaint statement seems to say it all. "I may err," he concedes. We can all say that and more, for we all do err. I am sometimes criticized for "fellowshipping brothers in error." My answer to that is that "brothers in error" are the only kind of brothers I have, for we all err. If error makes us heretics, we are all heretics. That is what the wise Augustine was pointing out. It takes more than a mistaken theology to make one a heretic. Indeed, a new, well-meaning Christian may be wrong about many things, but if he has a good and honest heart he can't be a heretic. On the other hand one may be squeaky clean doctrinally and yet have a perverse disposition and a trouble-making attitude.

Augustine goes on to say, "but I will not be a heretic," by which he meant that he would not make such a big deal out of his "error" (in which case of course he would insist that he and he only is right) as to be pushy and schismatic. He is saying that he might be wrong about one thing or another, but he is not going to cause dissension in the church over his opinions.

Alexander Campbell stated Augustine's distinction in a different way. He distinguished between errors of the mind and errors of the heart, the latter being much more serious. It is errors of the heart —malignity and perverseness, as George Campbell put it —that leads to heresy. Or to put it still another way, when Augustine listed all sins as

either carnalities or animosities he concluded that the latter are the more serious. That is, sins of the spirit are more deadly than sins of the flesh, and heresy is a sin of the spirit. A person with a bad heart is a greater threat to the wellbeing of the church than a person with a wrong idea, for something can be done about the wrong idea if it is held by one with a good heart. That is why the Scriptures hold out little hope for the heretic: "Reject a divisive person (heretic) after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a one is warped and sinning, being self-condemned" (Tit. 2:10-11). Self-condemnation or insincerity thus identifies the heretic, which is never true of the well-meaning person who is simply honestly mistaken.

If we heeded Augustine's wisdom by conceding our own inclination to err while resolving that we will nonetheless always be peacemakers, we would find it wonderfully liberating. We would be less critical and condemnatory of others. "To err is human, to forgive is divine," says it in a different way. We create a more loving climate when people are free to be wrong in their search for answers, honestly and sincerely mistaken without being heretics. One may hold a different view on the millennium, the nature of inspiration, methods of doing the Lord's work, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, etc., etc. without being "warped and self-condemned."

Nearly always it is the person who harshly condemns and judges others, with all the name-calling that goes with it, that is most likely to be a heretic rather than the one he brands with that epithet. Let us not be of that spirit. —*the Editor*

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

ON WASHING ONE ANOTHER'S FEET

If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. —Jn. 13:14

Of all the visits I have made to all kinds of churches, both in and out of the Stone-Campbell tradition, I have witnessed only one foot-washing service, and that was at a Seventh Day Adventist Church here in Denton. It was well done, quietly and with dignity. It was part of a love feast, what some would call a church dinner. Those who chose to participate repaired to back rooms, men and women separately. I was invited to witness the men's service. I was impressed with the humble manner in which it was done: leaders of the church washing each other's feet, and fathers washing their sons' feet. There was no ceremony, no words spoken. They quietly washed each other's feet, drying them with a towel, and that was it, all in the name of the One who washed his disciples' feet.

I had the feeling that the boys would likely always treasure the experience of their fathers washing their feet at church, and that they would be less likely to fuss at each other at home. And I supposed that elders of the church who washed one another's feet would be less likely to have confrontations. While I did not have the privilege of witnessing it, it must have been a tender and delicate sight, sisters in Christ washing each other's feet and mothers washing their daughters' feet.

Well, that was the Adventists, and we are not Adventists. We always explain such things away with, "It is not a church ordinance." That may be true, but Jesus said nothing about it being a church ordinance. He simply washed his disciples' feet and told them to do the same. We've always said that the Bible teaches by either command or example. Here we have both an example and a command. But still we explain it away, and that may be all right so long as we have in our hearts and lives what Jesus had in mind, that we show love for each other in humble ways. Perhaps we are washing feet when we visit a shut-in, drive Miss Daisy, take someone a meal, clean a neighbor's house, or even (and this will do it if you want to be humble!) walk someone's dog.

That is how I have always understood the passage, for I doubt if in our culture the Lord cares all that much whether we literally wash each other's feet, not with any great frequency at least. But he is very concerned that we consistently show love for one another, even as he has loved us, and that we do this in ways that are as humble and condescending as washing feet, as opportunity allows.

But this interpretation does not preclude an occasional service of literal washing of feet for its symbolic value, such as at a Maundy Thursday service, which a few denominations around the world practice. It was a practice of the ancient church for the rich to wash the feet of the poor on Maundy Thursday before Easter, as our Lord did on the Thursday night before he went to the Cross the next day. Maundy comes from "mandatum," and refers to the command to "Do this," that is, wash one another's feet. Washing of feet might, therefore, be part of a Maundy Thursday service, along with Communion. Whatever symbolic value such a service has, there is no better reason to do it than that Jesus did it.

I am impressed that the oldest "Campbellite" church in the world, the Park Avenue Christian Church in New York City, founded in 1810, had such a service this past Maundy Thursday. I was privileged to read the Order of Worship for the occasion.

The introduction to the service reads:

> At this Service we celebrate the institution of Holy Communion at Christ's last supper with the disciples. Maundy Thursday has also been a time to remember Jesus' betrayal and desertion by his followers. In keeping with our Lord's example, we have incorporated the Mandatum ("Do this. . ."), Christ's Supper of bread and wine and his humbly washing of the disciples' feet.

After appropriate readings, hymns, prayers, and responses the minister conducted the Mandatum. There was first the washing of the elders' feet. The elders then, in recognition of their role as servants, donned towels and washed the feet of those in the congregation that chose to file down front at the appropriate place, men and women alike. Those participating were instructed to remove only one shoe and sock; those wearing hose did not need to remove them. Instructions explained that only a small amount of water would be used and it would be immediately toweled away. While the elders washed the feet of their people the chorus chanted antiphons, such as "If I, your Lord and Master have washed your feet, how much more ought ye to wash one another's," and "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." The congregation then entered into the Communion service.

However biblical a service like this may be, it would be an oddity to most of us in Churches of Christ, mainly because "We've never done it that way." It is for our own good that we realize that there are adventures into meaning and truth, especially in reference to Body life, that we have not yet explored. A meaningful foot-washing service may be one of them. We would not have to make it "a church ordinance," whatever we make that mean, in order to do it in some manner.

We might start by having a foot-washing ceremony at our next big debate, with the gladiators washing one another's feet before they start flaying away at each other. But that could be a dangerous innovation. The debate might never come off!

Or we might have a foot-washing unity meeting in which the leaders of all the Church of Christ factions come together and follow the example of Jesus in washing one another' s feet. We could include all our editors, which might be mostly the same people. I, for one, whether a factional leader or not, would be pleased to participate. Think of it, elders, preachers, editors, professors (let's include their wives) from all across the Church of Christ brotherhood gathering and washing one another's feet in a humble and sincere effort to follow the example of Christ! Let's make it an annual affair —such as on Maundy Thursday —and watch it grow in beauty and meaning with the years. In time we would

find ourselves a united people, loving one another even as Christ loves us, for how can you wash a brother's feet and then reject him? That is how the world will know that we are truly Jesus' disciples in that we have such love for one another.

That scene in the upper room of Jesus donning a towel and washing the feet of his followers is breathtaking in its beauty and mystery. The sinless Son of God washing the feet of sinful men! What a glorious mystery that he ever did such a thing! He said he did it to set an example. He was the master but he assumed the role of a servant. A servant? We are to be servants to one another, after the order of washing each other's feet? What a staggering truth! Do we not seriously err if we let it slip by us? —*the Editor*

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

Heroes and Reformers of History … No. 5

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER: A MAN FOR OTHERS

While in the title we identify Dietrich Bonhoeffer as a man for others he could be identified several other ways, such as a modem martyr, since he was executed by the Nazis as a leader of the Confessing Church in Germany which opposed Hitler almost from the beginning of his despotic rule. Or the term "Cheap Grace," which he coined, would point to his concern that the church has compromised the gospel of the grace of God by lack of any real commitment. Or if I used but one word, discipleship, it would go far in summarizing both Bonhoeffer's life and thought.

Jesus Christ was at the center of Bonhoeffer's heart, thought, and action. He often referred to his Lord as "The Man For Others," and he followed Jesus with such devotion and commitment that his friends came to see that descriptive phrase as applicable to him as well. So, Dietrich Bonhoeffer as a man for others is our hero and reformer for this installment. He is a hero because he willingly laid down his life for his faith, for his country, and for the church. He is a reformer, particularly in theological thought, in that he sought to give deeper meaning to the basics of the faith, especially for the rank and file of the church.

The thing that impresses me most about Bonhoeffer is that even though he had followed the advice of American friends by fleeing the hostility of Hitler and finding refuge in this country, he could not bear to leave the church's struggle against Nazism for others to fight alone, so he returned to Germany to what he must have known was certain

death. And the peace and resignation with which he faced death is one of the great stories of martyrdom in the history of the church. Near the end when death was imminent he might have escaped, his friends having arranged it, but he let the chance pass lest he endanger his family. One of his brothers had been arrested for conspiracy in an attempt on the life of Hitler.

Those who saw Bonhoeffer die report that he faced the gallows with such an exemplary faith that that alone was enough to convince one of the claims of the Christian hope. Shortly before the War's end, even when the advancing Allies' big guns could be heard in the distance, Hitler in his madness still had to wreak vengeance on his presumed conspirators. So on April 3, 1945 two men approached Dietrich's open cell at an extermination camp in the Bavarian forest and said, "Prisoner Bonhoeffer, get ready to come with us." All the prisoners knew what that meant. He moved quickly to place certain mementos and instructions in the hands of friends. One note was to an old friend, a bishop of the church in England, which read: "This is the end —for me the beginning of life."

The German camp doctor who witnessed his execution afterwards wrote: "In the almost fifty years that I worked as a doctor, I have hardly seen a man die so entirely submissive to the will of God." He penned this account:

> "Through the half-open door in one room of the huts I saw Pastor Bonhoeffer, before taking off his prison garb, kneeling on the floor praying fervently to his God. I was most deeply moved by the way this lovable man prayed, so devout and so certain that God heard his prayer. At the place of execution, he again said a short prayer and then climbed the steps to the gallows, brave and composed. His death ensued after a few seconds."

He was only 39. A month later Nazi Germany fell.

Born in Breslau, Germany in 1906 of gifted parents (His father was a professor at the U. of Berlin), Dietrich was exposed to excellence in his youth. Noted scholars, such as Adolf von Harnack (church history) and Ernst Troeltsch (philosophy), were frequent guests in his home. Yet his home was not all that religious, and when he decided at 16 to enter the ministry his parents were indifferent and his brothers opposed it. When his brothers complained that he would waste his life with a vacuous and ineffective church, Dietrich replied, "If the Church is feeble, I shall reform it." It may have been an unduly bold remark for a youth, but it presaged his stormy and tragic life in the church.

He made his way through Tuebingen and Berlin universities in a breeze, precocious and independent. In class he would politely challenge the revered von Harnack to the amazement of his fellow classmates. He presented his doctoral thesis when only 21, which Karl Barth, who became both a friend and admirer, described as “a theological miracle.” He worked for awhile as an assistant pastor of a German-speaking church in Barcelona, Spain where he related so well with the common folk that the church was resurrected in spirit and doubled in size. At 23 he presented his inaugural dissertation to the U. of Berlin and was given a faculty position teaching Systematic Theology.

Before launching his academic career in his native Germany he came to America to study for a year at Union Theological Seminary in New York, which left him unimpressed with American theology. He was amazed that the students had so little interest in real theology, and, being a Lutheran, he was particularly puzzled that they would laugh in class when Luther was quoted on sin and forgiveness. But he was impressed with their concern for the poor and needy, and he shared in some of the efforts to relieve some of these problems. While in New York he became aware of America’s racial problem and for a time attended a large black church and visited with blacks in Harlem. These are experiences that he afterwards shared with the youth in Germany.

While in America he was asked one question, not by a professor but by a student from France, that moved his life in a different direction: “Do we believe in the Holy Catholic Church and the Communion of the Saints?” His French friend insisted that one can’t be a Christian and a nationalist at the same time. From that time on Bonhoeffer became interested in the church universal, and while he had been critical of the Ecumenical Movement he now became involved in its work. He eventually served as international youth secretary for Germany and central Europe for the World Council of Churches. He is today honored as one of the “Men of Unity” in the history of the Ecumenical Movement. Stephen Neill wrote a book by that title in which he has a chapter on Bonhoeffer along with the likes of John R. Mott, William Temple, and Pope John XXIII as heroes of ecumenicity. Too few churches today have men of unity in their ranks.

Soon after Bonhoeffer returned to his post at the U. of Berlin Hitler came to power. It was about this time that Bonhoffer gave his noted lecture on “The Church Is Dead” in which he called for renewal, commitment, and discipleship, themes that eventually made him an influential theologian. Another theme was the worldliness of Christianity in which he contended that the church must get out in the street and the business world and minister to people where they are. The church must become a suffering church, one that knows

something of the cost of discipleship. It is ironic that it was the rise of Hitler and Nazism that created a special place for the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, for Hitler forced the German church to decide whom it would serve, the Third Reich or Jesus Christ.

The commitment and discipleship that Bonhoeffer talked about in such persuasive language found their fulfillment in Nazi prisons and extermination camps for millions of Christians. While the world has properly not been allowed to forget that Hitler killed millions of Jews, it is a little known fact that millions of Christians died for their faith during the Nazi era.

There were two churches in Germany in those days: the “German Christians” were those who supported Hitler; the “Confessing Church” were those who insisted that they had but one Fuehrer, Jesus Christ, and they opposed Hitler’s evil designs, which they detected early on. Dietrich, still a young man, was a driving force in the Confessing Church —“Confessing” came to mean witnessing for one’s faith, even unto martyrdom. Surely the faith of the Confessing Church in Germany is one of the great chapters in the history of the church. After Hitler blew his brains out in his fortress bunker “the faith of our fathers” burned on in the hearts of millions of Germans, many of whom prayed for their Nazi persecutors in prisons and concentration camps. We can believe that among Dietrich’s last petitions to the Father was, like his Lord’s, forgiveness for those who murdered him. He was, by the way, a great believer in intercessory prayer, which he saw as vital for the renewal and unity of the church. No one can long hate the person for whom he often prays, he insisted.

While Dietrich was a pacifist, he modified his position to the extent that he could collaborate in an effort to assassinate Hitler. He was serving in the Abwehr (Intelligence Service) at the time, and there were those in the German High Command who wanted to eliminate Hitler and sue for peace with the Allies. Several elaborate plans were carried out in an effort to kill Hitler but they all failed. When the Abwehr’s secret files were found by the Nazis, executions abounded. Hitler delayed the execution of some of them, including Bonhoeffer, in hopes that torture would extract still more names of conspirators. It was a gruesome two years of imprisonment for Dietrich. Then came execution day, which was his “V Day.”

He was engaged to be married at the time of his imprisonment. His fiance visited him monthly. She and other of his loved ones did not know what had happened to him until some months after the War was over. The leaders of the Confessing Church announced that if Protestants canonized saints as does the Roman church that Dietrich Bonhoeffer would be a saint.

Bonhoeffer forged much of his theology in the fires of the underground resistance movement, in a secret seminary that trained ministers for the Confessing Church, and while in prison awaiting execution. His theology therefore has a ring of urgency. Faith, repentance, baptism, commitment, discipleship, the church as community are all vital terms in his thinking. And Jesus Christ is the heart of it all. Some of his writings that were smuggled out of prison continue to influence the church today, including Roman Catholic seminaries who see in Bonhoeffer the one Protestant theologian who really understood the catholicity of the church. Roman Catholics also appreciate his grasp of the church as the community where Christ is gathered with his people.

In my reading of the great souls of the church I always watch for the Scriptures that influenced them most. One of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's favorite passages was Is. 55:11: "So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."

It may have been raining at 5:00 a.m. that cold April morning when Dietrich was summoned from his cell for the walk to the gallows. His favorite passage may well have come to mind, which is introduced by "As the rain comes down and the snow from heaven, and waters the earth and causes it to bring forth and bud." I can see drops of rain on his forehead as he knelt before the gallows to pray for the last time. Even as he prayed the rain fell gently on the dark shirt that he wore, dressed for execution. As he took those last steps he could remember that God's word is like the rain, "So shall My word be . . . It shall not return unto Me void. . . but it shall accomplish what I please."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's word for us is that while God's grace is free it is not cheap. There is a cost to discipleship. It may even cost us our lives. But he learned in the caldron that was Nazi Germany that he who loses his life shall find it. —*the Editor*

Give me the hope that will deliver me from fear and faintheartedness. -- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

LIFTING UP HOLY HANDS

Cecil Hook

With little notice we usually pass over Paul's words: "I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands (1 Tim. 2:8). Is the uplifting of hands in prayer a required ritual of acceptable worship?

The concept of raising hands to God accommodates man's thought that God is localized somewhere in the sky. Such accommodative language is common in the Scriptures.

What is the purpose and meaning of lifting up holy hands? Is there some context that can help us to understand?

Paul seems to be alluding to the heave offerings and votive offering required of the Jews (Dt. 12:6,11,17; Num. 15:19). A votive offering is sacrificial or performed in fulfillment of a vow or in gratitude or devotion. It expresses a vow, a wish, or a desire.

Holy hands were those of the priest who was consecrated to make such offerings. He was dedicated exclusively (Dt. 18). Now, we are priests individually, consecrated that we may offer sacrifices lifted toward God with holy hands. Our offerings are expressions of thanksgiving, devotion, vows, and prayers.

The uplifted hands are not empty. They present the heave offering. In context, Paul urges women to beautify themselves, not with finery, "but by good deeds, as befits women who profess religion." These are the hands that have comforted the sick and aged, have lifted the downtrodden, have fed the hungry, and have written checks to alleviate human need. Such things are our heave offerings, our "thank you's" to the Lord.

To say that the holy hands must not be empty is not to indicate that prayers are answered in reward to quota performance. It means that the prayers rise from hearts which demonsrate gratitude and devotion. It is the worship of the heart that is raised rather than the literal hands. Prayer is accompanied by the offering of a dedicated life.

If you wish to extend your hands upward while praying or praising, that is acceptable unless you do it out of confidence in a ritual or to impress others. If you raise your hands when praying with others but not in private prayer, it may be proper to question whether it is a street corner gesture to be seen of others.

When your life is presented to God in total dedication, your specific “thank you” offerings are your uplifted hands.

Allergies of a Different Kind

Who isn’t allergic to something? Allergies are annoying but usually are not life-threatening. What causes one person to wheeze and sneeze and snort and scratch may not bother the next person. For that reason a person should not try to forbid everything that bothers him.

We have spiritual allergies also. What makes one person uncomfortable may be enjoyed in good conscience by other persons. We have different scruples, opinions, hangups, conditioning, and peeves. These should not be life-threatening. But we hear a lot of grumbling and hollering and raving and condemning by people who want to outlaw everything that bothers them. That is bigotry and self-centeredness.

We cannot readily cure all of our allergies, but we can keep ourselves noninvolved with the things that bother us and let others take care of their own situations. We should not become allergic to the fact that others do not suffer from our own allergies.

I can solve my difficulty with cedar pollen by moving to an area where there are no cedars. My irritation caused by citric acids does not bother me ifI eat no citrus fruits. I can remedy my allergy to perfumes by keeping away from women!

Concentration on one’s irritations can almost drive a person out of his mind. If my wife were drowning in the river, however, I would forget the itchy welts caused by the mosquitos and the threat of poison ivy along the bank.

What we need is more important things to demand our attention.

New Thoughts

Some minds are like a spring trap;
Once sprung, that's all they'll hold.
Some minds are like a museum place,
Still holding on to what is old.
Some minds are like a ship in storm,
By old and new tossed back and forth.
Let mine be like a treasure vault,
Accepting all that has true worth.

We are saved by faith but not by the merit of faith. Jesus is the one who saves. It is not of our works. Often people who disdain the idea of works salvation really substitute faith for works. By stressing the intensity of faith that is thought to qualify one for grace, they are actually substituting meritorious faith for meritorious works! One of these does not make a person feel more secure than the other. Both are based upon human achievement. —Cecil *Hook, 1350 Huisache. New Braunfels.* TX. *78130*

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

READER'S EXCHANGE

I appreciated" Are You Tired of Trying to Go to Heaven?" in the April issue. I have a hard time shaking the attitude of the teacher you described in the article. Intellectually I know what you said is true. I've read the relevant Bible passages and I know what all the words mean. Still, deep down inside, I feel like I need to try harder. It is a tough one! Anyway, your article helped. Thank you. *Steve Coburn, Springfield, Illinois.*

(Steve's problem, humbly described, is the problem we all have, and the cause of it, I am persuaded, is man's inherent assumption that he can save himself or do it himself. It is the bill of goods Satan sold man from the beginning. Accepting the full beauty of God's grace is a gradual thing. There are no quick fixes. In the end an acceptance of God's free

gift of grace will cause us to work more, not less, but it will be more from love and confidence than from fear and dread. —*Ed.*)

Isn't it strange that we can read an article by a woman in some Christian journal, but we cannot listen to her give the same message from the pulpit of our congregations? —*Dean Melton, East Alton, Illinois.*

(It is when we start asking questions like this that we set the stage for change down the road. —*Ed.*)

We see some movement toward unity in the various Church of Christ groups. There is hope on the horizon! - *Bob Howard, Myrtle Creek, Oregon.*

The institutionalization of the ekklesia, which is of course the secularization of it, marches on, and I see no end, except that small groups will pull off and try to recover the informality and love life of the early followers. Am I too pessimistic and can you see a bigger light beyond the tunnel? Give our love to that beautiful wife. —*Norman Parks, Murfreesboro, Tn.*

(Norman has done too much for the renewal of the church, especially in giving our sisters some hope of liberation, to be called a pessimist. Yes, I do see light at the end of the tunnel —and even some shafts of light through the cracks before the end of the tunnel. Institutionalization and secularization may not be as evil as Norman supposes, but to some degree necessary to the ongoing of the church through the centuries in changing cultures and conditions, just as the church in an important sense is to be "worldly." Bonhoeffer would at least say so. Read about him in this issue. —*Ed.*)

Your article on Socrates reminded me of a fascinating statement by John Stott, which I quote: "We need both Christian gadflies to sting and harry us into action for change, and also Christian watchdogs who will bark loud and long if we show any signs of compromising biblical truth. Neither gadflies nor watchdogs are easy companions to live with. Nor do they find each other's company congenial. Yet the gadflies must not sting the watchdogs, nor must the watchdogs eat up the gadflies. They must learn to coexist in God's church and to fulfill their respective roles by concentrating their attention on us, the generality of God's people, who badly need the ministry of both." —*Alex Wilson, Louisville, Ky.*

Several years ago I contemplated leaving the Church of Christ, but I didn't because of one of your articles on unity in diversity. And I prayed and came to see my obligation to serve and teach where I was. Would you believe that our next preacher was a Spirit-filled, grace-oriented lover of God's word who had grown up in the Church of Christ? Well, it didn't work out, for they didn't want to hear him anymore than me. His resignation was forced and mine was voluntary. One of the elders said, "We are going to clean out the

sinners and have a nice little church here." Up until then we were growing and people were learning to open their minds to God's word. Since they don't want us anymore we are now meeting in a home and the preacher is looking for a job. —*Jamye Russell, Center, Tx.*

(It is to your credit that you hung in and tried to make it work. There is not much you can do except pray for them when they run you off like that. But your labor will not be in vain. Down the road at that same church there may one day be a big difference because of your patience and what your preacher said about grace. His word does not return to him void! —*Ed.*)

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

OUR CHANGING WORLD

One day while I was in Dallas the Methodist Hospital in Houston called and told Ouida that at long last my pathological reports were all in and that they revealed that I was completely free of cancer and there would be no need for treatment beyond the surgery. PTL for that! There was a chance that radiation treatments might be necessary. While I will in a few weeks return to Houston for my first check-up since the surgery, I will eventually have that done in Dallas on a regular basis, twice a year for awhile and then once a year, for the rest of my life, they tell me, just to make sure. Ouida and I believe that the prayers of so many of you made the difference. We thank you as we do the Lord. Considering what might have been, an occasional check-up is nothing. While I am back to running my two miles each a.m., I have not forgotten the first time I tried to stand on my feet following surgery, with Ouida on one side of me and a nurse on the other. The Lord blesses us even in or especially in adversity, doesn't he?

Ouida has a morning out once a week while I watch after Mother Pitts, who turns 94 in May. She meets for Bible study with several other women who are special friends, but I think they do more visiting than they do studying. Then she goes shopping and spends lots of money. Except for playing with the computer, which some would call work, her morning out is the most fun thing she does all week. Oh, yes, her flowers. You should see the long bed of amaryllises that grace our front yard. When they are in full bloom passing cars sometimes slow to take a look.

On May 10 I will give the honors day address at Dallas Christian College where I have been teaching part-time for several years, and on May 19 I will give the commencement address at Minnesota Bible College in Rochester. On May 21-23 I will

teach at the preachers' retreat at the Christian Harbor Youth Camp in Ladysmith, Wisconsin on principles of unity and fellowship. Sometime after that I will be at the research and production center of the Good New Productions in Joplin, Mo. to do some video tapes. The late Carl Ketcherside left unfinished a video presentation of the three pastoral epistles, and they have asked me to complete the series. It is an unexpected blessing to do something with Carl one more time.

Sometime before summer is over I must take my 15-year old grandson somewhere special as I do each summer. He wants to go to California, if you can fancy a Texan wanting to go to that distant country. If any of our California readers, and we have lots of them, have any suggestions on how to entertain a 15-year old boy in California and still survive, I will be pleased to hear from you.

Having been twice invited, I plan in May to attend the formal opening of the "Boston Church of Christ" in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area. While they have been in the area for three years doing groundwork they are having their formal opening at a large hotel near the DFW airport. They expect to start with several hundred in attendance. I have encountered the Boston work in various places across the country for more than a decade, the most surprising being at Princeton when I returned there recently for an alumni gathering, but because I keep getting mixed signals about the nature of its work I have hesitated to write about it. Now that they are in Dallas I hope to provide some kind of a definitive report in our next issue. Whatever judgments might be made, and from the mainline Churches of Christ they are all bad, the Boston program will probably prove to be the most phenomenal development in the history of the Churches of Christ this century. Already they have attracted the attention of church growth experts because of their incredible success not only in many leading American cities but in numerous major cities of the world. While they have scores of churches and thousands of members they have yet to build their first edifice. They always rent, for if they should build a facility, they say, they would soon outgrow it, and besides buildings tie you down!

One of the most presentable and colorful papers published among us is *The Christian Appeal* (2310 Anna St., Amarillo, TX 79106), edited by Gene Shelburne and supported primarily by Churches of Christ of the non-Sunday School persuasion. It is totally free of the sectarian spirit and promotes the unity of all Christians. Each issue treats in depth some basic theme, the current issue being "The Ascension of Christ," all well written and eminently biblical. The sub rate is only $5.00 per annum.

The most recent survey of Churches of Christ in Great Britain reveals 4,928 members in 140 congregations. This includes American-style churches as well as Disciples, except those that became a part of the United Reformed Church some years back. Some of the British churches are over 100 years old.

Insofar as I know the upbeat, innovative Richardson East Church of Christ in Dallas is the only congregation among us that has a "New Baby Dedication" service on an annual basis. The parents, usually eight or ten couples, will present their children before the congregation in celebration and thanksgiving. The purpose is to "lift these little ones and their parents up in prayer, and call our church to the serious commitment of watching over their spiritual future." This is the church that also has annual Thanksgiving services with a Christian Church and a Disciples of Christ church.

In my book, *The Stone-Campbell Movement,* I describe Nashville as "the magisterial city of Churches of Christ." It is appropriate therefore that our Jubilee should become an annual affair in that city. It will be held in Nashville's Convention Center, July 4-7, and the theme is "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness," based on the book of Luke. The blurbs for the affair point out that one may also see Opryland U.S.A., the Hermitage, and Music Row while in the historic city. For a brochure write the Antioch Church of Christ, 2142 Antioch Pike, Antioch, Tn. 37013.

Guardian of Truth, published by brethren of the "Conservative" or non-institutional Churches of Christ, announces a meeting with the "institutional brethren" to be held in Dallas, July 12-14, the second of its kind. This is more of an effort to resolve differences by discussing the issues than to accept each other in spite of the differences, and yet it is not the format of the old debates that probably did more harm than good. Among the issues to be discussed by representative men from both sides are hermeneutics, the church and institutions, and fellowship. Here is more evidence that the old myth that we have to resolve all our differences before we accept each other in fellowship will not die. For further information call Steve Wolfgang, 606-236-4204 or Roy Lanier, Jr., 214-271-0106.

Leaven is a new quarterly journal, the purpose of which is to enhance ministry in the Churches of Christ. The address is 522 Angelina Dr., Arlington, TX 76108. The subscription rate is $15.00 per annum. The first issue has articles by Paul Watson, Edward Fudge, Lynn Mitchell, and James Thompson, along with others. It is a 73-page publication dealing with interpretation and worship, along with book reviews and resources for teachers. Lynn Mitchell, who is the editor, expects the journal to explore the most basic concerns of the church's ministry. We wish this new effort well.

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

BOOK NOTES

One of my favorite preachers is David H. C. Read, who was a chaplain during World War II and longtime speaker on National Radio Pulpit. He is so good that I read his stuff to Ouida. I have been able to get two of his books at a special price, and as long as they last I will pass them on to you at half price. *This Grace Given* and *Grace Thus Far* tell of his struggle with grace from boyhood to five years as a P.O.W during the war to his life as a minister. You will be edified. They are usually $8 .95 each, but you can get them both for that price, postpaid.

Another volume of special interest to me is *Countdown for Unity* by John Fogarty, which is in the class with K. C. Moser's writings in that he was a man ahead of his time. Written in 1963, he treats unity as a global problem, and looks at Communism, Catholicism, and Protestantism in terms of the contribution they can make toward the unity of all believers. He gives a sympathetic treatment of Vatican 2 and the Ecumenical Movement. He pleads for unity not in any doctrinal system or church but only in Jesus Christ. To be written by a Church of Christ missionary in the 1960's it is an unbelievable book. Since these surfaced out of someone' s attic we are making them available for what they sold for originally, only $4.50 postpaid.

We will send you 18 back issues of this journal, selected at random by us, for only $3.00. This below-cost offer enables you to see what we have been saying all these years.

It is important to us all, including the postal service, for you to inform us well in advance of any address change. It is an expensive item for us when the post office has to inform us after you have moved, and it causes you to miss the paper.

You may still place your order with us for Carl Ketcherside's autobiography, *Pilgrimage of Joy,* at $15.00 postpaid, but the book will not be ready until late this year. But we are assured that it will be forthcoming.

Faith Martin's *Call Me Blessed* continues to be a favorite for those who are looking for answers on the ministry of women in the church. We still have copies at $8.95 pp.

Subscription Rates: $6.00 per year or two years for $10.00. In clubs of three or more (sent to separate addresses by us) $4.00 per name per year. Outside the U.S.A. $8.00 per year.

⁂ ⁂ ⁂

RESTORATION REVIEW
1201 E. Windsor Dr.
Denton, TX 76201*
[Address Correction Requested]

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
DENTON, TX
PERMIT NO. 308

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: $6.00 per year or two years for $10.00. In clubs of three or more (sent to separate addresses by us) $4.00 per name per year. Outside the U.S.A $8.00 per year.